

# THE MINERVA.

GET WISDOM, AND WITH ALL THY GETTING, GET UNDERSTANDING.

No. 23. [NEW SERIES.]

NEW-YORK, MARCH 12, 1825.

VOL. II.

## POPULAR TALES.

FROM THE FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN,  
SPANISH, AND ENGLISH.

Truth severe, by fiction drest.—GRAY.

### THE DOMINIE OF KILWOODY.

"De'il break your leg, if ye get out ower the door the night to ony o' your drucken companions! Do ye think that I am to be getting out o' my warm bed, to be letting you in at a' the hours of the night, you nasty sow! I wish the first drap of whiskey ye tak, wad gang like boiling lead doon your throat." Such were the mild remonstrance and exclamation of scolding Tibby to her husband, John Bicker, the dry Dominie of Kilwoody. John answered with great mildness: "Ah, Tibby, the whiskey's nae so strang now-a-days, woman; its mair like water than ony thing else. Ye ken this morning, Davy and I drank a whole mutchkin afore our breakfast, and were never a bit the waur of it." "The mair's the pity," retorted Tibby, "the deil's ay good to his ain. But out o' this house ye shanna stir till morning." "Only ower the way to Saunders Glasse's," returned John, "I gae Davy and Rob my hand, that I would come, and I'll no stay very lang: indeed I man gang, Tibby." "Ye'll gang o'er my back then," exclaimed Tibby, placing herself betwixt John and the door, "and ye's get the mark of my ten nails as deep as I can houk in your face. Am ower easy and good natured wi' ye, you vagabond, and that's the way ye leave me to gang after your drunken sand-beds, that would soak in as muckle whiskey as would fill our goose-dub; ne'er-do-weels, that hae their stomachs paved wi' whin-stanes." John stood and wriggled his shoulder, and scratched his head at this announcement of a determined blockade. He tried to appease the enemy, but in vain. He knew his own strength, but was unwilling to exert it. A vigorous attack would in a moment have procured him liberty; but this, John was afraid, would be attended with too much clamour; and perhaps be productive of consequences he might afterwards be sorry for. He therefore determin-

ed to call off the attention of his infuriated spouse by a seeming acquiescence, and to take advantage of some lucky opportunity of effecting his escape. But this system of tactics had been tried too often before, and Tibby seemed determined it should not succeed this time, as she cautiously barred the door of their little cottage, and placed herself so as to have a full view and command of that weak part of the garrison. John was turning disconsolate to the fire-place, when his feelings were aroused to the full pitch of resolution by the voice of a friend on the outside, "John, we're biding for you: what de'il keeps you mon?" It was the voice of Davey Gourlay, and the sound was irresistible. John flew to the door, which he unbolted in a twinkling, burst from the enraged grasp of his wife, who fell upon the threshold in the momentary struggle, and ere she could recover the use of her tongue, or her limbs, the Dominie of Kilwoody, nimble as the mountain deer, bounded over the hills, with the all-inspiring emotion of newly recovered liberty, and anticipation of social delight. Tibby, seeing all her plans frustrated, and her determination thwarted, could only give vent to her feelings in imprecations against her husband, and the direst wishes as to his fate. "I wish he may never enter this door again alive," she exclaimed. "May I hae just the satisfaction of stretching him on his dead-dale. I hope this nicht he'll taste his last drop o' whiskey in this world. It wad gi' me the greatest pleasure, that on Sabbath next he was laid in the kirk yard o' Kilwoody; the graceless wretch?" Here she sobbed with passion. "O! that I saw him in his dead claes, and the black bits o' board on ilka side o' him!"

The day had been moist and warm, but towards evening the clouds began to discharge their contents in torrents, and one of those sudden transitions, from mildness to the most piercing cold, took place, which are so often woefully felt by the valetudinarian about the close of autumn. John, however, the hero of our tale, was snug, comfortable, and dry, in the warm corner of Saunders Glasse's clean-sanded parlour, where every fresh potation of whiskey toddy seemed to inspire him and his companions

with warmer and more affectionate regard for each other. The solitary song soon gave place to the universal chorus. The storm that raged without was lost in the joyous uproar that expressed all the rapture of social feeling within. Long before midnight, John and his four jovial companions had vowed to stand by each other, "come weel, come woe." Scolding wives, squalling children, to-morrow's labour, to-morrow's care, were all forgotten, and the hour of parting, like the hour of death, if it crossed the imagination for a moment, was chased away by the loud sounding laugh, the cordial shake of the hand, and the fresh flowing bumper.

Scolding Tibby, as the only gratification of revenge which was in her power, bolted carefully the door; moved all the pieces of furniture which were portable, to strengthen the fortification, and went to bed at an early hour, vowing that her drunken husband should find no shelter in home from the howling storm which now threatened almost every moment to overthrow their little dwelling. Wakeful to enjoy the success of her manœuvres, Tibby, however, did not sleep; she listened with the utmost anxiety betwixt every pause of the hurricane, and watched for the Dominie's return, that if possible she might add insult and reproaches to her merciless refusal of admittance.

The hour of one had tolled its solitary note from the parish kirk of Kilwoody, when the attentive ear of Tibby distinguished the sound of some one fumbling about the door in search of the latch. It was the next moment gently lifted, but the door still remained immovable; a knocking was then heard, but still Tibby kept silent. "Aperite portam! open the door," cried the Dominie, in a tone, which shewed evidently the state of inebriation in which he had returned. The vengeful denial stood trembling on Tibby's lip, but she repressed it, rightly judging the silence with which she treated his request would add to her petitioner's embarrassment. With the exultation of successful revenge, she heard his knockings, his threats, and his entreaties, and so callous was she to his sufferings, that in a short time, wearied with the tumultuous passions to which her mind was a constant prey, she fell fast asleep.

About six in the morning she was awakened by the sound of several voices at her door, and ere she could half dress herself, to appear with decency, she distinguished, amidst a confusion of tongues, the alarming expression of "Ay, ay, he's gane at last. Wae's me! John, it's an awfu' thing, at yer ain door too, stiff and cauld: it's an awfu' thing." Tibby removed the barricading, and opened the door. She pierced among the small crowd, which was now fast increasing, and beheld her husband lying without

sense or motion on the ground. "John! John!" she exclaimed with terror, "dinna lay there, man; come awa to your warm bed, I didna mean to hurt ye."—"Nae bed will ever warm him," exclaimed one of the by-standers, "a dreadful life ye led him in this warld; and I'm sure he canna be waur used in the neist." Tibby stood motionless, while two or three of the stoutest young fellows in the crowd carried the body within doors, and laid it on the bed. "There never was sic a nicht under heavens," exclaimed one, "as last night; nane but the heart of a monster wad hae refused shelter to a dog in sic a storm." "Oh!" cried another, "she'll find a judgment come ower her afore she dies; it's to be hoped honest John's now in glory; but as for you, ye limmer, an awfu' end will be seen of you." Tibby was not a disposition to allow herself to be baited thus with impunity; and put to her shifts, she stoutly defended herself. "It was a' owing to his drunken graceless ways," she retorted, "I told him how it wad be, I did a' that I could to keep him frae that nasty den, Saunders Glasse's, but it was ordained it was to be the death o' him." "That's a mair sensible word," said Willey Clew the weaver, who was also an elder of the kirk, "that's a mair sensible word, than I wad hae expected o' ye; for if providence, for its ain ends, ordained that John Bicker was to die, no a' the warm fire-sides atween this and Loch Leven wad hae saved him, had he been put just in the middle o' them." Every body assented to the truth of this sage observation, and Tibby by the lucky hint, obtained a respite from further animadversion on her conduct. The visitors, one by one, dropped off, eager to enjoy the momentary attention they might command by being the first to communicate the dreadful event to the quidnuncs of the parish of Kilwoody. All the old women, as they sipped a little glass of comfortable aqua-vitæ, raised their eyes to heaven, and inveighed most bitterly against the sin of drunkenness. The wives in many an energetic lecture, set forcibly before their husbands' eyes the dreadful fate of the dry Dominie, and the men retorted it could not be all the whiskey in Saunders Glasse's change-house that could hae affected the well-seasoned stomach of Johnny Bicker; but that he owed his death, poor man, to the termagant cat-o'-thunder, his wife, who had left him exposed all night to such dreadful weather.

There are some consciences, who have so much antipathy to the stings of self-reproach, that let their actions partake of ever so much turpitude, the most innocent, and even the most praiseworthy motive is assigned for them. Tibby was one of this class; and to hear her expressions, as she undressed the inanimate body of her husband, one could



not have supposed that her obstinacy had had the smallest share in his destruction. "Wae's me, John, you wadna hae come to this untimely end, if ye had ta'en the advice o' your ain Tibby. Ye wad hae stopt comfortable by your ain cosie fireside, and no tempted providence at a' the hours of the nicht; weel did I ken that nae good could come o't, and muckle wark I had to try to keep ye at hame. But no; ower my back ye wad gang." Tibby was here interrupted in her cogitations by the entrance of Auld Alice. This withered sybil had been so long accustomed to all the paraphernalia of mortality, that deaths and funerals were the chief sources of her enjoyment. Alice kept an exact register in her own mind of all that had died, or were likely to die, in the parish of Kilwoody; could name all the otherwise unrecorded tenantry of the church-yard; and as if she expected to survive all the present generation, was at no loss in assigning, even to every living inhabitant, his or her future cold and narrow mansion. Indeed, the region of death seemed to be the element in which she lived. With a ready tact and handiness of manner, which shewed her heart went with the work, she closed the dying eyes of one, stretched out another decently on the board, which, in Scotland called the dead-dale, is placed under the corpse previous to its confining; and dressed a third in the fancifully cut and ornamented garb of the grave, the work of her own taste and ingenuity, which alas! was only to be exhibited for a moment and withdrawn from mortal sight for ever. An expected death produced a feeling of calm satisfaction in the mind of Alice; but a sudden event, of the kind I have just related, seemed to be a supernumerary favour conferred by fortune, in her kindest moments. Alice therefore no sooner heard of the circumstance, than she flew to offer her services. While she kindly inquired into the particulars of the affair, her interrogatories were mingled with the sagest reflections on the necessity of submitting to, what she termed, the workings of providence, and many a wishful look she cast to the bed, eager for the signal to begin her operations. In a few minutes the dead-dale arrived, and Alice with alacrity pursued her willing task. She stretched the feet nearly parallel to each other, laid the hands by the side, and spread the fingers open; then laying a sheet over the whole body, she placed a plate full of salt on the belly to keep off the influence of any evil spirit; after which, and refreshing herself with a dram, she took her leave, assuring Tibby that she would return punctually in the evening to watch the whole night by the side of the corpse, an attention which the country people in Scotland never omit paying to their deceased friends. Alice was

punctual to her appointment, and Tibby, feeling little inclination to sleep, became the partner of her vigils. The large eight day clock, which had click'd for many a year in the farthest corner of the parlour, had been, as is customary on such occasions, condemned to temporary silence, and the tabby cat, which had hitherto roamed unrestrained, was, by Alice's direction, imprisoned in a solitary out-house. Tibby and her friend sat themselves down on each side of a comfortable fire, and placing the large family Bible on the table betwixt them, they read or endeavoured to read, chapters alternately, wisely passing over the hard names which now and then occurred, neither of them being great adepts at dissecting polysyllables. This, together with a little village scandal, a ghost story or two, and now and then, a small drop of comforting liquid, enabled the ladies to pass the night without much uneasiness.

The next day at noon, Tibby was rather surprised at the entrance of two clean, neat, and rather fashionably dressed young men, who, uncovering as they approached her, with a great deal of politeness informed her, that they were Messrs. Chronic and M'Grueel, surgeons and apothecaries from Edinburgh, who had lately commenced practice in the parish of Kilwoody, and that they had called to solicit her permission to view the body of her husband. Tibby, unable to divine the casue of what she considered their singular curiosity, would fain have denied their request; but she was not a little abashed by their manner, which, though gentlemanly, was familiar and confident. She almost involuntarily muttered some term of acquiescence. The two Esculapian philosophers approached the bed, and touched the body in several places; their observations and remarks were made, according to Tibby's report, in Latin: at least, what to her seemed just as intelligible. By their manner, however, she guessed that they differed in opinion; but after a few minutes' wordy contention, they fixed upon a method of elucidating the subject; a method, which, as there is no such thing as a coroner's inquest in Scotland, they knew could only be put in practice by the consent of Tibby: this was, to examine the interior of the deceased, to search for the cause of his sudden departure; the body exhibiting appearances by no means common in apoplexies.

Tibby no sooner heard their request, than she lost all the respect with which she had hitherto treated them. She flew into a violent rage; and being joined by Auld Alice, who that moment entered with part of the grave paraphernalia, and soon understood from the ejaculations of her friend, the cause of dispute, such a clamour ensued, that the two Galens of Kilwoody thought it best to

make a timely retreat. "What!" cried Alice, "gie honest John Bicker to the doctors, like a hangit man, for a' the Edinburgh Collegeners to glowr into the inside o' him." "God keep us a'," added Tibby, "what the de'il do they want to see? Our John was shaped like ony other decent man; I'se warrant there were nae ferlies about him, mair than about ony other." "Never mind, Davy Gourlay and Saunders Webster," answered Alice; "will sit up the nicht to see that nae harm happens to the gude man, and we'll hae a good deep grave houked for him the morn's morning. I never thought thae doctor chields ower canny. There's Saundy Gordon, he's been cloghering and spitting his inside out for thae twa or three years, and they've been ay gieing him this bottle and that bottle. Ouch dear, I think it's fleeing in the face of providence; and the doctors 'ill hae it a' to answer for, some day."

On the morrow, which was the day appointed for the interment, the sable crowd assembled as is usual on such occasions; about half an hour previous to which, Tam Mowat had arrived with a coffin. The body had been dressed with great neatness by the dextrous hands of Auld Alice; a glass of wine had been handed to each of the few persons who had entered the dwelling, and Tibby was desired by the wright to take the last look of her inanimate husband. It was then that the emotions, which she had hitherto succeeded in suppressing, became irresistibly manifest. She was for a few minutes convulsed with sobbing; this was luckily succeeded by a plentiful shower of tears, and—but we did not set out with the intention of writing a pathetic story: suffice it to say, that the dry Dominie was soon enclosed in that narrow boundary, which but a short time prevents us from mingling with our kindred earth. The sad reliques of mortality were borne to the door; the velvet *mort-cloth*, as it is called in Scotland, was thrown over it; and the procession moving on, soon arrived at the church-yard of Kilwoody. Alice watched it from the window, and was not a little surprised at observing the two surgeons, Messrs. Chronic and M' Gruel, among the crowd of mourners. She was morally certain that these gentlemen were not in the number invited; but she deferred her comments on this singular circumstance to a more convenient opportunity.

The reader perhaps may have already guessed the motives of the two above-named gentlemen, in endeavouring to ascertain the exact spot of interment. The difference of opinion, which had arisen between them at the house of John Bicker, had continued on their way home; and like all other disputes, had ended in confirming each party in his own particular opinion. As they had

been disappointed in their application for leave to make a regular dissection, they were determined that the dry Dominie of Kilwoody should again visit the upper air. In London, workmen might have been easily found to effectuate this premature resurrection; but in Scotland, we believe the offer of future independence could not have bribed the poorest peasant to the sacriligious operation. The two men of science therefore were resolved, in the "witching time of night," to take the labour upon themselves; and accordingly, being provided with pick-axe, shovel, and some other implements, they about an hour after midnight set out with cautious and noiseless footsteps through the village, to violate the spot where so many generations of the natives of Kilwoody had hitherto rested in peace.

The church-yard of Kilwoody was situated on a rising ground, which seemed to have been fashioned by art for its then destination. It was surrounded by a wall, on the outside nearly ten feet high, but little more than half that height in the interior. In some places, where this wall had been broken down, it was repaired, like many of the fences in Scotland, with rough unshapen stones, whose angular points rudely fitting together, served to give it some degree of solidity, without the use of mortar. The night was serene and mild; but the multitude of stars, that spangled the dark blue sky, made it lighter than the two surgeons wished for. Shrouded in thick great coats and fur travelling caps, and bearing the implements for disinterring the Dominie, they soon arrived at the church-yard, where the rough protuberances of the uneven wall enabled them easily to reach the top. Having attended the funeral for the sole purpose of noting the situation of the grave, they had no difficulty in immediately commencing their labour. This was comparatively easy, as the earth still lay loose and light; yet, ere they had arrived at the coffin, the tender skin of their hands, unaccustomed to such friction, began to convey no very pleasant sensation. They persevered, however; and at last, had the satisfaction of hearing, by the hollow sound, that they had reached the surface of John Bicker's narrow dwelling. In a little time, they cleared its whole extent, and with their tools, wrenching open the lid of the coffin, they soon effected the resurrection of the Dominie. "Where is the bag?" said one to the other; and it was soon discovered that each had carelessly depended on the other for this necessary article. This was vexing; for the risk of detection in the conveyance, was thereby considerably increased. However, they were forced to trust to that good fortune, which had hitherto favoured their enterprise; and placing the body carefully on the grass, at



some little distance, by the side of a distinguishable tomb-stone, they began with alacrity to refill the grave with earth, and again make up the hillock, neatly covered with turf, which, to the eyes of a whole cotemporary generation, marks the peaceful resting-place of even the lowliest and the humblest of the Scottish peasantry.

While they were employed in this operation, and had nearly completed their labour, they were alarmed by the sound of a deep hollow groan. It only broke for a moment the surrounding stillness; and indeed passed away nearly as quickly as the instant of its perception. The two surgeons, however, started up, and stared aghast at each other; and without uttering a word, listened most attentively. Their whole souls for some minutes seemed to be in their ears; but all was silent. "Did not that seem a groan?" muttered M<sup>r</sup> Gruel. "Hush!" replied the other, catching hold of his friend's hand. They again bent themselves in the attitude of listening, but all was still, the air was even calmly silent, and they again began to adjust the turf. "It must," said Chronic, in a low tone, "have been the sighing of the wind among the tomb-stones; and yet, in my ear nothing could sound so like a groan." "Let us make what haste we can," returned his friend, "there may be other living creatures besides ourselves, even in the precincts of this church-yard."

The moment their work at the grave was completed, they both assisted in carrying the body to the wall. There, placing a rope under the arm-pits, they slid it gently down the deep exterior; and leaving it there, leaped back into the church-yard to secrete their tools in the corner of a dilapidated tomb, which, at a very remote period, had contained the bones of some favourite retainer of the ancient barons of Kilwoody. Every thing being prepared for their departure, M<sup>r</sup> Gruel first mounted the low wall, at the spot where he had deposited the corpse of the Dominie; previous to his meditated descent on the outside, he darted his eye through the gloom below, as if measuring the extent of the leap, when suddenly uttering an exclamation of terror or surprise, he rushed back to his friend. "Gracious God!" exclaimed the amazed surgeon, "he is moving from the wall." His companion, inspired more with curiosity than alarm, looked immediately over, and to his utter astonishment, beheld John Bicker the Dominie, seated, as well as he could distinguish, at some little distance on the ground. "I must be certified," said Chronic, "that this is no delusion. Follow me," so saying, he leaped from the wall, and was immediately imitated by his companion. They ran to the spot, and without giving themselves time for reflection, grasped the Dominie in their

arms. "Are you really a living man?" said M<sup>r</sup> Gruel with great earnestness. "Where am I?" returned the Dominie in a voice so low, languid, and feeble, as marked the extreme debility, to which he was reduced. "Thank God!" answered Chronic, "we have come in time to deliver you from death, at which the imagination shudders; had we been but a few moments later, you might have suffered the short but horrid consciousness of being in the grave."

The Dominie by his action seemed unable to comprehend the meaning of their words, and appeared nearly fainting, when the two surgeons placed a bottle to his mouth, which they had brought as a cordial for themselves. The few drops he swallowed wonderfully revived him, preventing that rigour, with which he seemed to be threatened, and M<sup>r</sup> Gruel disrobed himself of his great coat, which the Dominie's new friends wrapped carefully around him. While they were about this charitable act, John Bicker, by the feeble light, perceived the habiliments of mortality with which he was clothed, and with a shuddering of horror he demanded an explanation. "There is time enough for that," replied the surgeons, "when you are more recovered. Try if you are able to walk with our support; we shall conduct you to our house, where you can obtain the quiet repose and invigorating medicines you seem so much in want of." The Dominie felt sufficient strength to move along, leaning on the arms of the two surgeons. On their way, they gave him a full explanation of his late situation; a narrative, which he listened to with the deepest interest, intermixed with those shuddering emotions of nature, which we feel at looking back on horrid situations of danger, our deliverance from which was effectuated neither by our wisdom nor our courage, but by a fortuitous circumstance we could never again depend upon.

The two surgeons, without interruption, conducted the revived Dominie to their genteel, clean, and comfortable dwelling. Having supplied him cautiously with nourishment, they caused a bed to be prepared for that repose, which was chiefly wanting for the recovery of his strength. In a few minutes he fell into a deep sleep, and his attentive hosts, who visited him from time to time, beheld with satisfaction, that his slumber was of that kindly nature which promised speedy renovation to his languid frame. He continued in this state the whole of the day, as it was not till evening that he awoke, wonderfully refreshed in body and mind. He arose, dressed himself in clothes which had been left for that purpose in his bedroom, and fearful lest his new friends should oppose what they might consider his premature departure, he stole softly to the door;

and relying on being unperceived in the increasing darkness, cautiously crept along, taking the nearest way to his own home.

Tibby had that evening, twenty times oftener than was necessary, stirred the large coal fire, till it blazed in the chimney, and had trimmed the lamp, which hung over the mantle-piece. She had busied herself all day to get rid of the uneasy thoughts, which oppressed her; and during daylight, assisted by the kind condolence of her neighbours, she had pretty well succeeded; but towards evening, as those visitors departed, the dreary sense of her hopeless, lonely situation, almost overcame her. She looked around her till every object that met her eye seemed to lay its heavy load upon her heart; she gazed at the glowing embers of the fire, and hardly felt the scalding tears which trickled down her cheeks. She then turned her view to the bed, which but yesterday had exhibited the mournfulest spectacle she had ever beheld; but a nearer object more interested her attention; this was the now vacant arm-chair at the fire-side, where her husband had held his seat by prescriptive right a magisterial throne, which Tibby amidst all her rebellions had never dared to usurp. It was now vacant, and as if to get rid of its for ever hopeless vacancy, with despairing sobs, she threw herself into it. The consciousness that she had been, to say the least, unkind, and unrelenting, tore her heart with agony. "Oh? that he had died in peace with me," cried she. "If I could hae but seen him for a moment. He was ower kind to me, and I didna deserve it—but nae matter," she added, bursting into a flood of tears, "it winna be lang afore we'll lie in ae cauld grave thegither."

At this moment, the sound of some person at the door assailed her ear; but how was she astonished, when she heard the well known voice of her husband, saying "Dinna be frightened, Tibby, dinna be frightened, my woman." She started from her seat, and looking around, beheld him within the threshold. Tibby trembled with agitation, without the power of uttering the faintest cry of terror. "Dinna be frightened," reiterated the Dominie, "dinna be frightened, my lassie; no for the world's wealth wad I harm ye." Saying these words, he made a motion to approach nearer, when with a confused idea of supernatural danger, Tibby snatched up the large family Bible which lay upon the table. The sacred volume is in Scotland supposed to be the most defensive shield a guiltless heart can be guarded with in the dangerous intercourse with disembodied spirits, and Tibby grasped it firmly in her arms. She fixed her eyes intently on her husband's countenance, and saw it not only beaming with affectionate regard, but that there was not any thing the least un-

worldly in its appearance. She soon felt herself so far recovered, as with faltering voice to mutter something which meant an inquiry as to the object of his awful visit. "Ye ken, Tibby my dear," replied the Dominie, "ye ken that your father, a wee while afore he died, sald a' his kye, and gae you the siller. Now you never wad tell me whar ye had hid it: that is my first business wi' ye, my woman." "There, there," said Tibby, pointing with eagerness to a corner under the farthest bed-post "Fifty four pounds sixteen shillings." John easily found the money and securing it in his pocket, "Now Tibby," said he, "gi' me your hand; will ye gang alang wi me?" "No! no!" replied Tibby, while an icy coldness ran through her veins, "No! not till God's time come." "But I'm alive, woman," returned the Dominie, "alive, and as well as ever I was in my life; I was only in a fit; the doctors got me out of the grave; convince yourself, I am alive." Ere Tibby was aware, she felt one of her hands grasped in both those of her husband. "Do you not feel," he added, "that I am flesh and blood!" Tibby's terror yielded to the conviction of her senses, as she suffered her husband to impress the warm kiss of affection on her lips. "I am an altered man, Tibby," said he; "I see the folly, the madness of my former conduct."—"And I see the cruelty of mine," interrupted his wife as she hung upon his shoulder. "Let us leave this place for ever," returned the Dominie; "my former worthless associates believe me dead, and we canna hae a better opportunity of parting wi' them; with this little money we'll gang to Edinburgh and begin some line of business, where, if industry, frugality, and temperance ever meet their reward, we maun thrive. Greet nae mair, Tibby, dry your een; will ye come wi' me!"—"Oh! to the world's end, John," was the ready answer, and they both immediately set about making preparations for their departure. The silver tea-spoons, marked with the husband and wife's initials joined in involving cipher, the gudeman's watch, articles which are hardly ever wanting in the dwellings of the Scottish peasantry, were easily stowed about their persons, and the more ponderous part of their property, Tibby, by her husband's direction, transferred in writing to the care of Messrs. Chronic and M'Gruel. Thus prepared, they set out, the darkness of the night favouring their concealment, and were soon arm in arm, with the most vivid hopes and ardent resolutions, on the great road to Edinburgh.

Early next day, the whole parish of Kilwoody was not a little alarmed by the news of the disappearance of the dry Dominie's widow. It was sagely conjectured, that the apparition of her husband had, in revenge



for her usage of him, carried her away bodily to the other world, which not a few of the old women perfectly recollected, perceiving an extraordinary blue flame the preceding evening hovering around the Dominie's dwelling; some had even heard what they called an awfu' and indescribable noise, which must have taken place at the moment when the revengeful spirit flew through the air with his prey. Auld Alice blessed herself that John Bicker could have no quarrel with her, as she had made his grave-clothes of the neatest pattern, and Tam Mowat, the wright protested, that wherever the soul of the dry Dominie might then be, he was sure his body was safe betwixt six good pieces of wood as ever were planed.

John Bicker and his wife, on their arrival at Edinburgh, rented a small shop, and laid out their little money in a stock of linens and hosiery. They wrote an account of their proceedings to Messrs. Chronic and M'Gruel, who feeling a wish to encourage such an industrious couple, furnished them with letters of recommendation to several respectable persons. This increased their business and credit, and every day saw them making gradual advances to comfortable independence. John soon transferred his stock to larger premises, and being fortunate in his speculations as a wholesale merchant, he was chosen one of the baillies of the city. This office in the Scottish metropolis, is the same as that of aldermen in London, only not so permanent. In this honourable situation he acquitted himself with impartiality and considerable talent, and those who beheld him in the municipal chair, dressed officially in black with the golden chain of dignity, and the medallion of justice depending from his neck, could never have recognised in the grave magistrate, the drunken Dominie of Kilwoody.

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### THE TRAVELLER.

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'Tis pleasant, through the loop-holes of retreat  
To peep at such a world; to see the stir  
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd.

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#### CELTIC SKETCHES.

##### No. III.

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OUR fellow-traveller seemed to pass the night not very comfortably. By accident or design, some of the heath plants on his couch had been set with the roots uppermost, and they lacerated and tormented him to such a degree, that when our guide came to arouse us in the morning, he declined pursuing his journey any farther; and we having fortified ourselves with a morning dram, set off for the mountain while it was yet gray dawn, our guide, though bearing a heavy basket all the while, proving himself by much the

fleetest pedestrian. When we had walked a number of miles, he paused, spread a clean napkin on the sward, and produced a breakfast for us that might have pleased a prince; and, notwithstanding our pressing invitations that he should join us, he persevered in keeping that distance which he thought became him, from persons who had been recommended by the Bishop.

I had a pocket telescope with which we were looking toward the summit of the mountain, and its appearance and use seemed to attract Donald's attention very strongly. I placed it across a stone, and directed it towards a hill at some distance, which, though they were not visible to the naked eye, was covered with sheep. Donald looked through it, started up, rubbed his eyes, and looked toward the hill. No sheep was visible. He clasped his hands, crossed himself a hundred times, drew a circle around himself, and another round the basket of provisions, and no persuasion would induce him again to touch the telescope, which he pronounced to be downright witchcraft.

Having refreshed ourselves, we ascended the hill; and though the distance did not appear to exceed two or three miles, it cost us at least four hours of very hard walking; and ere we ascended to the very summit, we were glad to rest ourselves by the bank of a small lake, embosomed in the north-east side of the mountain, and apparently one solid mass of perennial ice. Even the noon-day sun was excluded from its surface, nor did it appear that the rays of that luminary could, by any chance, light upon it. The ground on which we sat might be about three thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the precipice above us about four or five hundred more. We ate our dinner in this elevated situation, and drank our grog, the water for which was taken from a brook that at midsummer was exactly at the freezing point. Some trailing mist of a beautiful white colour was hanging on the top of the precipice. We admired its beauty; but our guide told us that we would feel it when we ascended. We did ascend, and though the mist proved to be such a rain as soon wetted us to the skin, we found an ample recompense in the additional sublimity which the floating clouds lent to the views. I could compare the wide expanse around me to nothing but the waves of a great ocean which had been raised by the most powerful of storms, and rendered solid by magic. The vast base of Mam-Suil itself removed all the others to such a distance as to give them the most intense blue; and here and there a snowy summit, towering above the rest, made it appear as if not the billows merely, but even the foam on their crests had been consolidated and rendered permanent. Not-

withstanding the immense elevation, second only to Ben Nevis, if, indeed, second to that, I found the summit of Mam-Suil covered with the most soft and delightful verdure, on which sheep were feeding, accompanied only by the ptarmigan.

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### THE DRAMA.

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—Whilst the Drama bows to Virtue's cause,  
To aid her precepts and enforce her laws,  
So long the just and generous will befriend,  
And triumph on her efforts still attend. BROOKS.

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### LONDON THEATRES.

COVENT GARDEN.—A new tragedy, entitled *Ravenna*, or *Italian Love*, was produced at this theatre on the night of the 1st December last. The scene is laid in Milan. Ravenna is a man so devoted to ambition, that he has even shed blood to enhance the importance of his house, and has resolved on the marriage of his son, Cesario, with Camilla, the absolute mistress of the duke, that through her influence he may become his "General's General." Camilla is enamoured of Cesario, but the count is already betrothed to Giana, the daughter of Sorana, who returns his affections with ardour and sincerity. Giana, though in humble station, is beloved by another, Bartuccio, an infamous secretary to Ravenna, who on learning that Cesario is his rival, unfolds the whole matter to his master. Ravenna commands the appearance of his son, draws from him his secret, and solemnly protests that he will disinherit and banish him, if he does not instantly repair to Camilla, ask her willing hand, and become her husband. Cesario repairs to Camilla, but to upbraid, not to soothe her. He feels his honour insulted by her passion, and he repels her advances with indignation. Though the princess, since she has been known to Milan, has suffered no humiliation before meeting with Cesario, her love now bends her spirit, and even while he scorns her she lays bare the history of her fortunes, and implores a return of that affection which burns within her bosom. She was the daughter of Doge Faliero, was driven a wretched exile from her native land, arrived in Milan without a ducat or a friend to aid her, was noticed by the duke, in desperation became his mistress, and though her station was one of degradation, her power had ever been used for the encouragement of virtue and the abasement of vice. The tale changes the feelings of Cesario from abhorrence into that of respect, and as a return for her sincerity he declares the love he entertains for Giana, which forms an insurmountable obstacle to his union with Camilla. Ravenna, thus thwarted in his projects, repairs to the house of Sorana, and seizes both the father and

the daughter. They are about to be borne to dungeons, when Cesario rescues Giana from thralldom. Sorana is imprisoned; and Cesario renounces the ties of blood. While Ravenna is placed in this dilemma, Bartuccio proposes a plan, which is immediately adopted. He hastens to Giana, persuades her that her resigning of Cesario, can alone preserve her father's life, dictates a letter to her, which she writes and gives him, and in completion binds her to a solemn oath to acknowledge the letter when produced before her, and never to divulge the circumstances under which it was penned. This effected, he procures Guadentia, a foolish, cowardly puppy, to drop the letter apparently by accident in the presence of Cesario, and to stand forth as the gallant of Giana. Cesario peruses the writing, becomes inflamed with jealousy, and determines on full investigation of the circumstances. In the meantime Camilla, hopeless in love, retires from her station of dishonourable eminence, and seeks for peace in solitude. Cesario, wretched by his fears, reaches the house of Sorana, where he finds Giana overwhelmed with misery. He produces the fatal letter, first commands, and then implores her to deny it. Her oath is still fresh in her memory, and she pronounces it to be her own writing. Cesario is now resolved; he casts poison into a goblet; from it they both drink, and through it they both die. Previous to their deaths, however, Bartuccio appears, and is engaged by Cesario, but whether slain or not, was difficult to be determined, for he retreated from the stage. The plot proceeded spiritedly; the situations were bold, novel, and effective; the language was vigorous, containing the most dramatic poetry; the sketches of the characters were natural, and admirably personated. The play was announced for repetition the following evening, amidst testimonies of applause.

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### BIOGRAPHY.

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The proper study of mankind is man.

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### MEMOIRS OF ARTHUR AIKIN.

MR. AIKIN is the eldest son of the late John Aikin, esq, M. D. He was born, in May 1773, at Warrington, at the time of his father's residence there, on his first entrance into medical practice, and was placed, at an early age, under the Rev. Mr. Owen, the master of the Warrington Grammar-school. This gentleman was, himself, no mean scholar; and, therefore, duly qualified to superintend the education of others. Here Mr. Aikin received his earlier instruction in classical learning; and from hence he was removed to Palgrave, a village on the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk, and placed with his uncle, the Rev. R. Barbauld, who,



at that time, conducted a school of high repute. Thus, it was Mr. Aikin's good fortune to be so favourably situated in his earlier years, as to have had opportunities of improvement, commensurate with the high talents with which he was gifted. Nor was he less fortunately situated in his maturer years, having studied under Gilbert Wakefield, in classical literature, and Dr. Priestley in chemistry.

The life of a man of letters, it has been often most truly observed, is, in general, but little calculated to interest the public; it has but few incidents, and those of too private a nature for general discussion. His study is his little world: where, unobserved, he pursues the even tenor of his way; known only by his friends and family. It is here he can alone be known, and here only that his character can be duly appreciated; of course the world must remain unacquainted with its most valuable qualities; its meekness, its affection, its benevolence; how it bears with long suffering the injuries of man; weeps in kind sympathy over the miseries of our common nature; consoles the afflicted; mitigates the pressure of poverty and distress; guides the unstable; reclaims the wanderer; and "goes about doing good," esteeming "it more blessed to give than to receive." These are the qualities which make up private worth, and form the character of the individual: of all this, the world knows but little. These observations apply well to the subject of this memoir, who, for many years, lived unknown to the world, in the practice of every social and moral virtue; cultivating, in privacy and retirement, literature and science: till, on the death of the late Dr. Taylor, the "Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce," elected him to the vacant secretaryship; and thus placed him in a public station, worthy of his talents and his virtue.

Although the worth of Mr. Aikin's private character can only be duly estimated, by those honoured by his confidence and friendship; he is, as a scholar, and a man of science, advantageously known to the world, by his many valuable publications, and by his labours as a lecturer in chemistry, in conjunction with his brother, Mr. Charles Aikin. These two gentlemen, published in the year 1807, a dictionary of chemistry and mineralogy, in two vols. 4to. and a supplement to the same in the year 1814. The object of this valuable work is not to enter so much into the theory of the science, as to offer to the experimental and practical chemist a large body of facts, collected from various quarters; so as to be independent of theory, and therefore of practical and permanent utility. During several years, Mr. Aikin was secretary to the Geological so-

ciety, of which he was one of the earliest members; many of his contributions form a most valuable part of its published Transactions. About this time, also, Mr. Aikin established the Annual Review, of which he was about four years the sole editor.

It would be tedious to notice all the works of interest and merit, which bear Mr. Aikin's name; but it would be unpardonable to omit the mention of his Translation of M. Denon's Travels in Egypt, in 2 vols. 4to., which displays his correct and critical knowledge of the original, as well as much literary and scientific information. We are not aware that Mr. Aikin has any definite work in immediate contemplation. His avocations and duties, as secretary to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, must leave him but little leisure; performed, as we know those duties are, with ability and zeal on his part, and with honour and advantage to the society itself.

## ARTS AND SCIENCES.

—Science has sought, on weary wing,  
By sea and shore, each mute and living thing.

### MINUTES OF CONVERSATIONS AT DR. MITCHILL'S.

#### TRUE PICKEREL OF THE NORTH AMERICAN STREAMS AND LAKES.

##### *Federation Pike, or Esoc tredecem-radiatus.\**

THE figure of the head and mouth bear a considerable resemblance to the Pike or mascanongy; particularly the broad or duck-snout, the projecting lower jaw, and this, together with the tongue and palate armed with teeth, and the general shape are characteristic enough. The intermaxillary bone, the situation of the ventral fins far behind on the belly, and the opposition of the dorsal fin to the ventral, are additional indications of the same family connexion.

The four individuals now before me, were obtained by Mr. William Sykes, from the Oneida Lake, on the 26th January, 1825. The largest is twenty-three inches long, and more than nine in its greatest girth. Eyes yellow—tail forked—skin

\* There is something quite peculiar as to the number of rays in the fins of this fish, which has led me to the adoption of its specific name. For the branchiostegous, pectoral, and dorsal, each contains thirteen rays; or with inconsiderable variations in the several individuals, was the most constant number. So it seemed to afford ground for a term indicative of the original States in the Union, by the characteristic number XIII.

covered with small scales. Colour of the back, and upper part of the head brown, almost running into black, of the contiguous parts brown running into yellowish or orange, and the yellow ending in a snowy or silvery white on the belly. The broad side, that is, the space between the back and belly, beautifully and curiously variegated with irregular black lines, which inscuate with each other, all the way from the eyes to the tail, and surround spaces of various sizes and figures, all of which are fantastic and odd. Toward the belly and tail, these black lines lose themselves, or end abruptly. Sometimes, there are oblong and roundish spots. The modification of these colours give the fish a very striking and indeed elegant appearance; quite equal to the Spanish mackerel, or indeed superior to it. Branchiostegous membrane has thirteen rays; pectoral fin thirteen; ventral nine; anal thirteen; dorsal thirteen; caudal about twenty-one. The fins are reddish, and their colour contrasts admirably with the others, to increase the beauty of the fish. I know of no fish, either of the fresh or even of the salt water, in the market and region of New-York, that equals it. The flesh is savoury and fine.

#### *Sea Serpents of various kinds.*

Four Sea Serpents were produced, from the Museum, worthy of a place in the collection of an Adolphus or a Seba.

1. The flat-tailed Snake of the Caribbean sea, called by the French zoologists *Plature a bandes*. It is the *Coluber laticaudus* of Linné, and *Hydrus colubrinus* of Schneider and Shaw. Brought by Dr. Madianna, from Guadaloupe.

2. A Chinese Water Serpent, brought by Captain Ozias Ainslee; and appearing to be the *Hydrus fasciatus* of Shaw, or black Water Snake with ascendant yellowish bands. Body thick and stout, with a long and slender neck, supporting a tiny and inconsiderable head. No scuta on the belly, or scutella on the tail; but in lieu thereof longitudinal rows of papillæ or cuticular tubercles. So that according to the prevailing arrangement, the specimen is an *Anguis*. Though under another classification, it would be called an *Hyprophis*, and of the species denominated *Hydrophis spiralis*.—

Length twenty-two inches. Taken off Lintin Island, near Bocca Tigris, below Canton.

3. A Serpent from the Indian Ocean, taken by Captain Mallaby, and presented by C. H. Hall, Esq. Caught off Sandalwood Island, two hundred miles from the main land. Its motion was stated to be languid in the water. When brought home, in spirits, the colour of the back was black; of the chin, neck, and belly, quite to the tail, orange yellow. When the creatures are alive, their hues very vivid and beautiful; the tail flat, and for about an inch and a half, diversified with vertical zones or bands; and elliptical spots of black checking the yellow. Length fourteen inches. Belly and tail destitute of scuta and scutella, and uniformly scaly. Eyes low on the sides of the head. Is evidently the *Anguis platyrus*, Linné, and *Hydrus bicolor* Schneider.

4. Different from the three preceding kinds, is another sea serpent with a shielded belly and pointed tail, resembling a land snake. Taken near the preceding, on the same voyage in the autumn of 1824. It possesses the leading characters of *Coluber*; having a scaly back, a scutated belly, and a scutellated sharp tail. The scuta reached in some circular plates of the usual form, from the chin to the vent, which was far behind and not more than two inches from the extremity. From that point to the apex or tip, they were two fold or double. Colour of the back, in its preserved state in alcohol, a dark brown interspersed with black spots in a quincunx order. On each side a dirty white fillet or stripe, extending from the corner of the mouth, along the ends of the scuta, quite to the tail. The scuta and scutella exhibiting all the length, transverse streaks of pale brown and dirty white, regularly alternating; eyes situated high on the head, and remarkably prominent.

Supposing it not to be an inhabitant of the land that had strayed from its ordinary residence, it seems to approach pretty nearly in character to the *Coluber hydrus* of Pallas, inhabiting the Caspian sea, (which is a body of salt water,) and its tributary streams. This species, to which the present specimen has the nearest affinity, is described by La Cépède on his natural history of serpents, vol. iv. p. 15, among the *Coleuvres*, under



he title of *L'Hydre*. But the subject requires a further investigation, to determine positively the species.

*Fossil Scallops and Barnacles from York River in Virginia.*

The region extending from north east to south west across New-Jersey, between Raritan bay and Delaware river, from the base of the Neversink hills to Bordentown, is one of the most memorable tracts along the Atlantic border of North America for its organic remains, more especially of oceanic and extinct animals.

The banks of the Patuxent, of the Potomac, of the James River, as well as various places in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, are also memorable for their antediluvian relics.

A parcel of fossil shells were reported from York River; probably from the locality or its neighbourhood, where Bishop Madison obtained the Mastadon skeleton, described in Medical Repository, Vol. 15. p. 388-10.

These, as received from James E. Dekay, M. D. consisted of three sorts, to wit:

1. Huge pectens or scallops, measuring about four inches from base to apex, and somewhat more, transversely from side to side. They belong to that division of the *Ostrea* family, which has unequal ears, and is fluted with seventeen grooves, and as many eminences diverging or radiating from the same point, near the place of junction between the two shells or valves.

2. Individuals of the same species, covered with a plastic crust of wave-worn and comminuted shells, &c. with an admixture apparently of clay and iron.

3. A shell of the same species, finely formed and of exquisite configuration, bearing parasites upon its back. These invaders seem to have been intrusive by their weight as well as by their number. They are piled upon each other, and coated with the ferrugineo-calcareous crust.

Our scientific D. H. Barnes, deemed worthy to be known to the Savans generally of the age, as well as to the mere geognosts, it was said, had decided them to be two undescribed creatures. To the *bivalves* it was told, that he had given the name of *Pecten diploneuron*, and to the multivalve, that of *Balanus geissopoma*. It was considered this was a striking example of the existence of as much scientific talent as was ne-

cessary to expound the geological disclosures of the country.

4. A fragment of sand-rock, heavy and massive, containing a great variety of impressions, resemblances, and things worthy of the Desmarests, the Brongniarts, the Cuiviers, and the other worthies of the time in which we live.

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SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY NOTICES  
FROM FOREIGN JOURNALS.

**MAGNETIC NEEDLE.**—It has been ascertained by a variety of experiments made in England, that copper exercises a considerable influence on the movements of the magnetic needle.

**USE OF SPEECH.**—Professor Roux of Paris, has practised for some years an ingenious operation, of his own invention, by which he restores the free use of speech to those who are deprived of it by the division of the *velum palatinum*, a vice of conformation of the inside of the mouth, which is almost as common as the *labia leporina*, or hare-lip. This invention is one of the most important and useful that has been made in surgery within a considerable time.

**STUTTERING OR STAMMERING.**—Mr. John Broster of Edinburgh has lately discovered a complete cure for stuttering or stammering in speech. He had operated with almost instantaneous effect on several persons who were labouring under that distressing malady.

A patent has been obtained in England, for a machine or apparatus, for producing light, by the mere contact of certain chemical substances. The apparatus is enclosed in a small metal box, which is sufficiently portable to be carried in the pocket: this box is intended to be placed open, upon the table in the bed-chamber; and, for the convenience of individuals, a small silken cord is attached to it, which may be carried across the room, when the sick person, sitting in a chair, or lying in bed, by slightly pulling the string, will immediately set light to the lamp, which forms part of the apparatus.

A newly-constructed and extended map of India, on four sheets of atlas, is nearly ready for publication. It is compiled from the latest surveys of the best authorities, including a separate sketch of the Burman Empire.

The author of *Wine and Walnuts* has in the press an historical novel, in two volumes,

entitled *The Twenty-Ninth of May, or Rare Doings at the Restoration.*

In the press, *The Art of Beauty*, with the best means of preserving and improving the shape, figure, complexion, eyes, &c.; and the history and theory of beauty: with illustrations by H. Corbould and others.

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT PARIS.—The subject proposed by this Society for the mathematical prize for 1826 is "The best method of calculating the perturbations of the elliptic motion of comets, applied to the determination of the next return of the comet of 1753, and to the motion of that which has been observed in 1805, 1819, and 1822.—In the sitting of January 3, 1825, M. de Humboldt presented a bark, hitherto unknown, which may be employed in certain cases with great effect in medicine. It is said to possess virtues analogous to the Jesuit's bark, and to produce similar effects with a third part of the dose.

### LITERATURE.

If criticisms are wrong, they fall to the ground of themselves: if they are just, all that can be said against them, does not defeat them. The critics never yet hurt a good work.

MARQUIS D'ARGENS

*Comic Tales and Lyrical Fancies, &c.* By C. Dibdin, the younger. London. G. B. Whittaker. 1825.

WE have turned over this little volume with considerable pleasure, and think Mr. Dibdin a poet of a very reputable standard. It is true, he does not aspire on any occasion to a very elevated flight, and as his subjects are common and of no great attraction, his poetry is not particularly interesting; but he gives a very happy turn to his pleasantries, some beauty and sweetness to his lyrical pieces, and keeps considerably above mediocrity throughout the whole collection.

The "Ornithological Review," is a good satire on some of the self-constituted critics of the day, and the "Wig," "Robert and Rob," "Fare and Feed" are amusing fables, and remarkably well told. But we were more pleased with the following ditty, not perhaps that it is more handsomely written, but because the theme is more agreeable.

#### CURIOSITY AND CUPID.

Curiosity, simple and young,  
Went carelessly singing one day;  
A boy from a myrtle grove sprung,  
Who look'd like the brother of May.  
"Ah! where pretty urchin," said she,  
"With arch-looking eyes, do you rove?"

"O, dear, pretty miss," replied he,  
"'Tis a secret as pleasing as Love."

Curiosity would with him hie,  
His secret to win by the way;  
A small golden toy caught her eye,  
Conceal'd in his bosom that lay.  
She said, "What is that, like a dart,  
You fear from your bosom to move?"  
Said he, "'Tis a charm for the heart—  
A secret as pleasing as Love."

Curiosity came, as they went,  
To where a fair youth lay asleep;  
Said the boy, "To this bower I was sent"—  
Of course the nymph would have a peep:  
That instant her guide drew the dart,  
"My secrets," he cried, "you would prove;  
And (while laughing, he aim'd at her heart,  
You'll find them as teasing as Love."

The following pastoral also, is ingenious, spirited and glowing.

#### A RUSTIC BALLAD.

A bee, while lay sleeping young Dolly,  
Mistook her red lips for the rose;  
There honey to seek were no folly,  
No flower so sweet ever blows.  
It tickled, and wak'd her; when, clapping  
Her hand on the impudent bee,  
It stung her; and Dolly, caught napping,  
Came pouting and crying to me.

Said she, "Take the sting out, I pray you!"  
What way I was puzzled to try,  
And a trifling wager I'd lay you  
You'd have been as much puzzled as I.  
I'd heard about sucking out poison—  
A sting is a poisonous dart—  
So I kiss'd her—the act was no wise one;  
The sting found its way to my heart.

The above is a very pretty eclogue, and shews the tact with which Mr. Dibdin composes the lighter pieces of poetry. The following is of a sadder strain, and whether it is that we are fonder of the melancholy tones of the harp, than of its spirited notes, or not, it particularly strikes our fancy.

#### THE BROKEN HEART.

Mark yon blighted flower,  
Yonder wither'd tree;  
Mark yon mouldering tower,  
Yonder wreck at sea:  
What the picture these impart?  
Pity sighs,  
And sadly cries,  
"'Tis, alas! the broken heart."

If the basis moulder,  
Can the dome endure?  
Props but vainly shoulder;  
Razing is the cure.  
Death the emblem will impart:  
Pity sighs,  
And "Death," she cries,  
"Only heals the broken heart."

This is certainly written with much



pathos and beauty, and is almost enough of itself to entitle Mr. Dibdin to a good name. We conclude our observations by recommending the book, which, though not republished, is advertised by one of the book-sellers, to the perusal of our readers.

### THE GRACES.

We come," said they, and Echo said, "We come,"  
In sounds that o'er me hovered like perfume :  
"We come," THE GRACES three : to teach the spell,  
'That makes sweet woman lovelier than her bloom."  
Then rose a heavenly chant of voice and shell :  
"Let Wit, and Wisdom, with her sovereign Beauty dwell."

### FRENCH FASHIONS.

THERE was a time when ladies in France received their visits whilst they performed their toilette. Wrapped in a huge robe de chambre, they conversed, dictated letters, or conspired against the popular minister, whilst two hairdressers, and two *femmes de chambre* were occupied at their heads, in constructing on the frail foundation of the hair, an immense edifice of gauze, pins, flowers, pasteboard, and diamonds. The head-dress finished, the vast envelope was removed, and an elegant *deshabillé* displayed, that could not alarm the most scrupulous modesty. One artist now traced the eye-brows; another shaded the cheeks; a third converted into alabaster a neck of ebony; whilst the hands were smeared with pastils, soaps, and almond-pastes. Then came robes and hoops, and brandenboughs and buffantes, gauzes, and tippets; and the bust, and the rest of the body was adorned with as many yards of drapery as would be sufficient at present to furnish a milliner's magazine. All this was performed in the presence of visitors, without offending the laws of decorum. When at last the favourite *femme de chambre* exclaimed, like a stage-coachman, "all right," acclamations and applauses echoed from every corner of the drawing-room. Abbés spouted madrigals and impromptues; colonels breathed raptures, and graces, and butterflies; the rose and the rainbow were exhausted to prove practically, that madame was charming, and that her toilette was the *ne plus ultra* of taste and loveliness.

How times are changed! now the toilette resembles the budget and diplomacy: secrecy is its soul. Profane eyes no longer penetrate the mysterious asylum of coquetry. Nothing is now the effect of routine and habit. The toilette is at present the produce of the most profound meditation, and very often of the happiest inspiration. If a banker's wife of the Chaussée d'Antin, or a duchess of the Rue St. Dominique, wishes to produce an effect by the originality of her robe, the romanticism of its or-

naments, or the conception of its *ensemble*, she traces her *plan*, prepares her *notes*, arranges her *ideas*, and adopts her system. Orders are immediately given to the sempstress, the dress-maker, the milliner, the glover, the fan-maker, the shoe-maker, and perfumer. The solemn moment approaches, and all the operators bring the tribute of their talent, and the fruit of their ingenuity. The dress-maker arrives in a brilliant landau, when every element is ready, and when nothing but the creative voice of genius is wanting. Under her learned direction every thing takes its appropriate place. Crowns are rounded; draperies are arranged; colours assorted; merinos intermingled with satin; velvet with lace; book-muslin with bombazine; and in an instant, as if by enchantment, all is finished, and the work perfect.

Which of these two methods is the most analogous to the *wants of society*, and the indefinite *perfectability of the human race*? This is a question which may well occupy the pens of all the French academicians, from the archbishop of Paris to the chanter of Attala. Never was a more interesting subject offered to the researches of a French writer. At least, it is certain that there are many French writers at present occupied on subjects not half so interesting.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### STERNUTATION.

STERNUTATION, or the act of sneezing, has been surprisingly commented on by those who do not defy augury. St. Aubin tells us, that the ancients were wont to go to bed again, if they sneezed while they put on their shoe. Aristotle has a problem, "Why sneezing from noon to midnight was good, but from night to noon unlucky." Eustatius on Homer says, that sneezing to the left was unlucky, but prosperous to the right; Hippocrates, that sneezing cures the hiccup, is profitable to parturient women, in lethargies, apoplexies, &c.

Pliny, Apuleius, Petronius, and a dozen others, have all something to say about it; but Buxtorf tells us, that "sneezing was a mortal sign, even from the first man; until it was taken off by the special supplication of Jacob. From whence, as a thankful acknowledgment, this salutation first began, and was after continued by the expression of *tobinchaum* or *vita bona*, by standers by, on all occasions of sneezing." To all which we may now add, that in England, when an old woman who takes Scotch snuff happens to sneeze, any old fool that is near cries out, "God bless you." Among nations not over civilized, it becomes the cause of some ceremonial or other.

When his majesty the king of Minomotapa sneezes, those who are near him salute him in so loud a tone, that the persons in the anti-chamber hearing it, join in the acclamation. In the adjoining apartments they do the same, till the noise reaches the street, and becomes propagated through the city: so that at each royal sneeze, a most horrid cry results from the salutations of his many thousand vassals. But it is different with the king of Senaar; for when his majesty sneezes, his courtiers immediately turn their backs on him (for that time only) and give themselves a loud flap on their right thigh.

In a scarce tract, by Gerbier, master of the ceremonies to Charles the first, Oxford, 1665, he gives as a rule of good-breeding: "Is not the custome, when a prince doth sneeze, to say, as to other persons, *Dieu vous ayde*, God help you, but only to make a low reverence." After this, the learned will give us commentaries on a sigh and a yawn. Indeed the latter has already caused the spending of much philosophy.

#### *Drawing Room of a Village Inn.*

On casting my eyes round the room, the idea suddenly struck me, that every one of the company was simultaneously employed in the act of *drawing*, yet each in a different sense of the word. Mine Host was in the act of *drawing* a jug of ale from a cask that stood in a corner of the room, while I was quietly *drawing* a bill on the girdle placed across my knees by way of a desk; Miss Molly was busily employed in *drawing* the curtains of the state bed, for the accommodation of as many of the travellers as chose to be flea-bitten; the Post Boy was *drawing* the cork of a gin bottle with appropriate vigour, while the scullion was still more vigorously employed in *drawing* the fire with her flannel petticoat; the Cook was *drawing* the bowels of a fat goose by the fire side, and the Nurse was *drawing* little Tommy about the room in a go-cart; my fellow travellers were in the act of *drawing* lots which of them should benefit by the only spare bed, while an artist-like looking personage in the corner was *drawing* a sketch of the motley group around him; the Dragoon in the corner was in the position of *drawing* his cutlass to brighten the blade, and Corporal Flanagan, by his side, was *drawing* the trigger of his piece to try the lock. Mine Hostess was leisurely employed *drawing* her congou in the tea-pot; and, lastly, the village Apothecary was *drawing* a jaw tooth from the sweet mouth of the Dairy-maid. So, Mr. Editor, with your accustomed candour, I think you will allow my hotel *pro tempore*, the polite appellation of a 'drawing room.'

#### EDITORIAL NOTICES.

No. 24. Vol. II. of *New Series* of the *MIRNVA* will contain the following articles:

POPULAR TALES.—*The Story of Aurelia Eberville. (Original.)*

THE TRAVELLER.—*Celtic Sketches*, No. IV.

THE DRAMA.—*London Theatres.*

BIOGRAPHY.—*Memoirs of Lady Davies.*

ARTS AND SCIENCES.—*Conversations at Dr. Mitchill's. Scientific and Literary Notices from Foreign Journals.*

LITERATURE.—*Notices of Works of Eminent Authors.*

THE GRACES.—*Leisure Hours*, No. II.

MISCELLANEOUS.—*Bell Ringing.*

POETRY.—By "Ianthé;" *Dying Year*, No. II. by "C. T. R.;" *Hope* by "Pythias." and other pieces.

GLENER, RECORD, ENIGMAS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—"C. A. S."—"C. T.," and Eugenia are inadmissible.

#### THE RECORD.

—A thing of Shreds and Patches.

The New-York High School has been opened with the most flattering prospects of success, and it is not doubted that the bill now before the legislature for a charter of incorporation, will receive the sanction of both houses.

Messrs Fletcher and Gardener, of Philadelphia, have completed the Vases which are to be presented to Governor Clinton by the merchants of New York.

A vessel is now fitting out in England, for the purpose of making a scientific voyage among the numerous islands in the North and South Pacific Oceans, and effecting, if possible, a communication with Captain Parry. It is to be commanded by Capt. Beechey.

An extraordinary rich mine of lead has lately been discovered in England. The ore is said to be remarkably pure, and ten thousand guineas had been offered for only that part of it which was in sight.

A monument is to be erected in Scotland, to the memory of Tannahill the poet.

#### MARRIED,

Mr. G. Smith to Miss M. S. Hanmer.  
Mr. B. Baily, Esq. to Miss A. E. Cottrell.  
Mr. I. H. Sniffen to Miss S. A. Bayliss.  
Mr. J. B. Wilson to S. E. Taylor.

#### DIED,

Mr. H. Mulligan, aged 85 years.  
Anne L. Caines, aged 25 years.  
Mr. John Peck, aged 25 years.  
Mr. J. Rogers, aged 41 years.  
Mr. C. Sackett, aged 35 years.  
Mr. E. I. Wands, aged 36 years.



## POETRY.

"It is the gift of POETRY to hallow every place in which it moves; to breathe round nature an odour more exquisite than the perfume of the rose, and to shed over it a tint more magical than the blush of morning."

For the Minerva.

## THE DYING YEAR.

No. I.

It was at eventide,  
Among the bleak and icy mountain tops  
That shroud the corse-like features of the north,  
Silvering their deadliness;—the sun had sunk  
From the far-stretching world beneath, but yet  
Lingered with tremulous beam on the wild heights,  
As mourning nature's high and stern behest.  
That bade him still roll on his tireless way,  
Leaving them lightless and forlorn,—around  
Was but one freezing, desolated waste  
Of rocky peaks and gulfs precipitous,  
Where Winter kept his court.

Deep in a rugged dell,  
That darkly yawned beneath, was stretched a form,  
Hoary and old and faint:—a few white locks  
Like feathery icicles waved faintly round  
His temples in the frozen breeze; his eye,  
As the sunk lid heaved from the beamless orb,  
Waxed still more ghastly dim; and his gaunt frame,  
Which told a tale of terrible strength gone by,  
Trembled and shook beneath the dark impress  
Of charnel-handed death.

It was the dying year  
Yielding to merciless Time, the tribute tax  
Of his fast ebbing breath. Meantime the sun,  
His countenance veiled in angry red, had thrown  
On the pale visage of the sufferer  
His last sad glow, and hastening on, had left  
The weeping moon amid her sister stars,  
To note the deed of death: hurried and wild  
Was her reluctant course, while round her form  
A feathery robe of gauze-like cloud she threw,  
And myriad fluttering spirits of her realm,  
Marshalled in solemn state adown the heaven.  
Imagination's eye viewed angels through  
The snowy film that muffled them about,  
And knew for tears by mourning spirits shed,  
The brilliant sparkles, which the grosser sense  
Of mortal eye did think were wandering stars.

But by the altering light  
Of the sad moon, the scene assumed a change  
As 'twere of magic working, where before  
Th' expiring year lay couched on splint'ry rock,  
O'er canopied by snowy tapestries  
And pendent icicles, alone was seen  
Another form in human semblance vast,  
Who bore the dying victim in his arms:  
Austere and harshly wrinkled was his brow,  
And from his eye a cold and cheerless glance  
Stole freezing round the scene: rigid and spare,  
Trembled like icy wires his hair and all  
His mien horrific, to each heart betrayed  
December—Winter's chiefest potentate!

Gazing all hushed  
In silence deep and stern, whole hosts stood round  
Of spirits, from the air, earth, sea, and heaven,  
Mighty and vast and terrible to view;  
But of them all, none did I note save two,  
Who actors seemed in this sad tragedy.

One on a splintered crag of rock-based ice,  
Fleshless and robeless, save a tattered shroud,  
Stolen by the red glare of the midnight moon,  
From the recess of some dark charnel house,  
Stood eagerly above the dying wretch,  
Grasping with horrible force a bloody dart,  
Which ever and anon, with murderous skill,  
As aiming at his heart, he poised;—his head  
Or skull, with a most loathsome coronet  
Framed of dead bones and knotted cypress wreaths,  
And turning curls of black and corse-fed worms,  
Was horribly encompassed; while glared forth  
From each black cavern, where the eye once dwelt,  
Flashes of spectral fire, like that which plays  
At midnight round the newly tenanted grave:  
Each frightened eye did know this form for Death!  
The startled moon withheld her fearful ray  
From his dark form; for while her light around  
On peak and dell, on precipice and flood,  
Streamed trembling down, no beam did deck the spot  
Where Death's most loathsome tread polluted; all  
Was dark and cheerless, like an adamant isle  
On a wide-spreading infinite silver sea.

C. T. R.

(The remainder in our next.)

For the Minerva.

## The dying husband to the partner of his bosom.

Oh! mourn not o'er my sable bier,  
Nor breathe a sigh, nor shed a tear;  
For one bright beam from Mammon's sun,  
Will drink those dew-drops every one;  
Will quickly bid those cloudlings fly,  
And make thy heart forget to sigh.

But when thou seest my bier depart,  
Look inward at thy widow'd heart;  
If there thou find'st the writhing throes,  
Of feeling, struggling with its woes,  
O! then some healing balm prepare,  
T' assuage the sorrows rankling there.

But let no human eye nor ear,  
Thy tears behold—thy sighings hear;  
For th' world with all its venom'd tongues,  
Its tainted breath and putrid lungs,—  
As sure as mid-day's sun's above thee,—  
Shall smile and say, thou didst not love me!

But when the funeral rites are done,  
And western hills embrace the sun;  
When cuckoos sing and zephyrs play,  
Come thou unto my house of clay:  
No human eye nor ear shall dare  
Disturb thee by intruding there.

And then, kind heaven permitting, I  
Will hush thy sighs, thy tears will dry;  
I'll hover round thee in the air,  
And guard thy haunt with watchful care:  
Reclin'd upon thy throbbing breast,  
I'll lull thy sorrows all to rest.

And when thy days on earth are done,—  
Thy crimson stream its course hath run,—  
I'll watch around thine earthly bed,  
And kiss thy lips, and press thy head:  
And as thy gentle spirit flies,  
In my bosom bear it to the skies.

Baltimore.

PYTHIAS.

We shall be happy to hear from our Baltimore Correspondent again.—EDITOR.

## A REMEMBERED FORM.

You remember the maid with her dark-brown hair,  
And her brow, where the finger of beauty  
Had written her name, and had stamped it there,  
Till it made adoration a duty!  
And you have not forgot how we watched with delight  
Each charm—as a new one was given—  
Till she grew in our eyes to a vision of light,  
And we thought her a spirit from heaven!

And your heart can recall, and mine often goes back,  
With a sigh and a tear, to the hours  
When we gazed on her form, as she followed the track  
Of the butterfly's wing through the flowers;  
When, in her young joy, she would smile with delight  
On its plumage of mingling dyes;  
Till she let it go free, and looked after its flight,  
To see if it entered the skies!

But she wandered away from the home of her youth,  
One spring, ere the roses were blown;  
For she fancied the world was a temple of truth,  
And she measured all hearts by her own:—  
She fed on a vision, and lived on a dream,  
And she followed it over the wave;  
And she sought—where the moon has a milder gleam—  
For a home; and they gave her—a grave!

There was one whom she loved, though she breathed it  
to none;

—For love of her soul was a part—  
And he said he loved her—but he left her alone,  
With the worm of despair on her heart.  
And oh! with what anguish we counted, each day,  
The roses that died on her cheek;  
And hung o'er her form, as it faded away,  
And wept for the beautiful wreck!

Yet her eye was as mild and as blue to the last,  
Though shadows stole over its beam; [past—  
And her smiles are remembered—since long they are  
Like the smiles we have seen in a dream!  
And, it may be that fancy deludes with her spell,  
But—I think, though her tones were as clear, [fell  
They were somewhat more soft, and their murmurings  
Like a dirge on the listening ear!

And while sorrow threw round her a holier grace,  
Though she *always* was gentle and kind— [face,  
Yet, I thought that the softness which stole o'er her  
Had a softening power on her mind. [dear,  
But, it might be, her looks and her tones were more  
And we valued them more, in decay,  
As we treasure the last fading flower of the year;  
—For we felt she was passing away!

She never complained—but she loved to the last;  
And the tear in her beautiful eye  
Often told that her thoughts were gone back to the past,  
And the youth who had left her to die.  
But mercy came down, and the maid is at rest,  
Where the willows wave o'er her at even;  
With the turf of a far-foreign land on her breast,  
Where the palm-tree points upward to heaven!

## LOVE.

## FROM THE WORDS OF LOPE DE VEGA.

Let no one say that there is need  
Of time for love to grow,  
Ah, no! the love that kills indeed  
Dispatches at a blow.

The spark which but by slow degrees  
Is nurs'd into a flame,  
Is habit, friendship, what you please,  
But love is not its name.

For love to be completely true,  
If death at sight should deal,  
Should be the first one ever knew,  
In short, be what I feel.

To write, to sigh, and to converse,  
For years to play the fool  
'Tis to put passion out to nurse,  
And send one's heart to school.

Love all at once should from the earth  
Start up full grown and tall,  
If not an Adam at his birth,  
His is no love at all.

## ENIGMAS.

"And justly the wise man thus preached to us all  
Despise not the value of things that are small."

## Answers to PUZZLE in our last.

Snuffers.

## SOLUTION OF ANAGRAM.

Buenaparte.

## NEW PUZZLE.

Esteem'd where'er I come, my usage kind,  
At every house I entertainment find;  
If at a feast I chance not to be there,  
In haste for me is sent a messenger,  
The king or emperor would uneasy be  
Should he sit down without my company:  
The meanest subject too, when he should eat,  
If I be absent will not taste his meat.  
And here, perhaps you'll call me trencher friend,  
Because at meals I constantly attend.  
I taste your dishes all, I must confess,  
Sometimes indeed to very great excess.  
Yet this is not because I take delight  
In feasts, like some base greedy parasite.  
To serve and please you is my sole intent!  
For this I spend my strength, myself am spent.  
In short, I am a universal good,  
Almost as necessary as your food;  
Pure without spot, and from corruption free;  
And saints themselves have been compared to me.

## ANAGRAMS.

I.—A hot pen.

II.—O tis a Mr Pit.

## EDITED BY

GEORGE HOUSTON AND JAMES G. BROOKS,

And published every Saturday

BY E. BLISS AND E. WHITE,

128 Broadway, New-York,

Four Dollars per annum, payable in advance. No  
subscription can be received for less than a year,  
and all communications (post-paid) to be addressed to  
the publishers.

J. SEYMOUR, printer, 49 John-street.